

WILL THERE BE GROWTH IN HEAVEN?

by Willis E. Bishop
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I have some suggestions - you think them through. There is not much biblical information on this. [New King James and Bishop quotations - emphasis added.]

First, morally we shall be perfect in Heaven. There are three works of sanctification which the Lord accomplishes in our lives.

There is past sanctification, according to Hebrews 10:10, which says "we have been sanctified." When we received Christ as personal Savior we were sanctified, we were set apart for the Lord. That is a status that we have automatically received.

There is a process of present sanctification. Hebrews 10:14: "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." You are I should be continually drawn apart from the things of the world to the things of the Lord and walking on higher ground. We are being sanctified at the present time.

Then there is future sanctification. I Thessalonians 5:23: "Now may the God of peace sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The process of sanctification will then be complete. It is in that stage that we will enter into Heaven, and I believe that morally (and it is an encouragement to us, is it not?) we shall be perfect in Heaven.

Physically, there will be change as we enter Heaven. Philippians 3:21: "Who will transform [that is, change the outward form of] our body that it may be conformed like the form of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." I John 3:2 - "we shall be like Him, similar, resemble Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Our resurrection body will have some connection with the one that is laid in the grave. But in addition, I think we can infer that when we shall be like Him we will be the same age, approximately 33 years old. He is our only model which we shall be like in Heaven. I believe many Bible scholars do agree with that inference.

What about infants who have died. Again as an inference - if an 86-year-old man is restored to 33 years, why can not an 86-day-old infant be matured to 33 years of age. It is heartbreaking in this life to see an infant that has never grown. I believe that would be true also of infants in Heaven. They surely will not remain in that stage but will be matured to be like the Lord Jesus, for they too shall see Him as He is.

Then, mentally there will be growth. Since finiteness can never become infinity (and we are finite), then Heaven will be an ever-unfolding learning process. It will not be like studying for exams

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but will be easy and comfortable. This will be a part of the real joy of being there and serving Him. And that's real growth.

Also, our increased understanding of Scripture as we talk with Paul and Moses, Jeremiah and Micah, and so on, and with the Lord Himself will be joyous, refreshing growth.

These are my suggestions. Morally we'll be perfect. Physically we will be changed at the moment we enter into Glory. And mentally there will be always joyous, happy growth.

Q. According to that there will be no babies in Heaven?

A. There is no marriage in Heaven - that purpose is long gone, and the babies will be mature, even as we are at that point. That would be my inference from the Scripture.

One source I have checked includes some poems which I would like to read in closing.

There are depths of love that I cannot know
Till I cross the narrow sea.
There are heights of joy that I may not reach
Till I rest in peace with Thee. (Isaac Watts)

Not now, but in the coming years;
It will be in the better land.
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And there, sometime, we'll understand.

We'll catch the broken threads again
And finish what we here began.
Heav'n will the mysteries explain,
And then, ah then, we'll understand.
(Maxwell Cornelius)